

Consultant to help curb plant odours

By **JASON MISNER**
The Champion

Halton Region is planning to hire a consultant this summer to study the Fulton Street sewage treatment plant to see what else can be done to minimize smell coming from the 60-year-old facility.

Lee Anne Jones, manager of infrastructure planning with the Region's planning and transportation division, updated Milton's community services committee Monday night on work being done to the sewage treatment plant, which includes the hiring of an odour consultant.

"We do need to assess where they're being generated and when, and we're doing that in the summer," she told committee members.

In an interview after the meeting, Ms Jones said the Region hasn't retained a consultant yet. But the aim is to have testing done in the summer, likely between June and September, to see where odours may be coming from.

"We're still scoping out the project."

The consultant's recommendations would be reviewed by regional council for costs to be considered in the 2005 budget.

Residents have complained for some time about odour, at its worst in the summer, from the sewage treatment plant.

Committee members were told about an odour measure taken by the Region in January. It installed a \$50,000 special carbon-filter to cut down on smell generated when treated sludge — a treated solid sewage byproduct — is transferred from a holding tank to a truck to be further treated off-site. The sludge is heated to kill pathogens so it can be used for farm spreading. When the material is moved around, it can create an odour. The special filter is attached to the truck's pump to cut down on the odour.

She said regional staff have visited the site and found the filter is working well.

Ms Jones told committee members the Milton plant is undergoing a \$2.4 million expansion internally to handle more waste from residential and industrial users. It's expected to be completed by the end of the year. That will bring the total to a maxed out sewage capacity of 18,500 cubic-metres-per-day, amounting to 41,100 people. Future sewage outflow will be handled by north Oakville's mid-Halton sewage treatment plant.

The Region is also working to install a \$1.1 million system using ultraviolet rays to more effectively treat the sewage before it's discharged into nearby Sixteen Mile Creek, the committee was told. Currently the sewage is treated with chlorine to remove pathogens.

The proposed system is before a class environmental assessment. If things go accordingly, the new system is expected to be ready in the summer of 2005.

Ms Jones said the \$1.1 million includes potential construction cost, increases that have been seen in other sewage-related expansion projects.

The waste handling upgrades at the Milton plant ballooned by about \$1 million. A lack of contractors with the technical expertise to complete these complicated water/sewage projects combined with ample construction opportunities have been driving up prices.

"We're not seeing the type of increase (in UV construction) we saw in the sludge pumping projects," Ms Jones said.

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